The PULPIT

A Periodical of Contemporary Preaching

MAY 1948

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Charles Clayton Morrison, *Editor*

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Sermon Illustrations

Contributed by Readers of The Pulpit

The Christian Home

Godly parents, moral discipline, love for mankind, the family altar and the family church are the things which ought to be associated with every Christian home. Out of such homes have come the strong characters and the leaders in every branch of life. Roger Babson, who has given much study to such matters, said: "I have not been able to find a single useful institution which has not been founded by an intensely religious man, or by the son of a praying father or a praying mother. I have made this statement before the chambers of commerce of many of the large cities of the country, and have asked them to bring forward one case that was an exception to this rule. Thus far, I have not heard of a single one."

Men do not gather figs of thistles, or grapes of thorns. Strong Christian characters are not an accidental growth. "Except the Lord build the house, they labor in vain that build it. Except the Lord keep the city, the watchman waketh in vain." Those who build such a home are building for eternity. — *Clarence E. Macartney, First Presbyterian Church, Pittsburgh, Pa.*

The Mother Spirit

Cyrus Dallin, one of America's great sculptors, was reared in the far west in a one-room cabin. His mother had the faith of a pioneer. Hardship was overlooked as she brought up her family under distressing conditions. She probably knew little about art. Her life had room for little else than children and hard work. Years later, after her son had become one of the outstanding artists of the country, she was asked to come to Boston for his latest triumph, the unveiling of his statue of the Pioneer Mother. You may have seen the statue in front of the State House in Boston—a mother leading a small child with one hand, carrying a Bible in the other. Both heads are upraised, and there is a contagious light of faith in their eyes. Dallin told his mother, after the unveiling, that he had used her as his model. She looked at the statue closely for a time, then said: "Cyrus, my son, I do not know whether or not it looks like I do, but I know that it feels like I feel." The artist had caught his mother's spirit. The externals were not entirely clear, art principles were not easily understood, but there in that statue was revealed in truth and reality the spirit of his mother.—*Edgar N. Jackson, Newfield Methodist Church, Bridgeport, Conn.*

The Spirit of Forgiveness

The story is told that a Chinese girl found in the pocket of a Japanese aviator killed in the same crash that killed her own brother, the photograph of the young Japanese wife. She wrote her a letter telling about the fight and the crash in which the two pilots were killed. She said in the letter: "They were your husband and my brother. I suffer the loss of my brother as you the loss of your husband, but the mere thought of the bitter suffering to which both the Chinese and the Japanese peoples have been subjected impelled me to write you. I wish to inform you that my parents and elder brother are greatly concerned about you. They bear you no grudge. As do they, I hope one day we shall firmly clasp each other's hands and with one heart mingle in complete friendliness." — *Lyndon L. Schendel, First Presbyterian Church, Bay City, Mich.*

Your Life Is a Sermon

St. Francis of Assisi once stepped down into the cloisters of his monastery and, laying his hand on the shoulder of a young monk, said: "Brother, let us go down into the town and preach." So they went forth, the venerable father and the young man. They conversed as they went. Down the principal streets, through lowly alleys and lanes they went, and finally found themselves at the monastery again. Said the young monk: "Father, when shall we begin to preach?" Replied St. Francis: "My child, we have been preaching; we were preaching while we were walking. We have been seen—looked at; our behavior has been remarked; and so we have delivered a morning sermon. Ah! my son, it is of no use that we walk anywhere to preach unless we preach as we walk."

How a Poet 'Found Himself'

John Oxenham, the British poet, was asked by a friend how he came to write one of his most beautiful poems. The poet then told how he had received from the war department a message concerning his son, who had been in the midst of some fierce fighting. The message read, "Killed in action." Hardly knowing what to do, the stricken father went finally to a little London chapel. In its semi-darkness he sat, bewildered; but at last a great peace came into his soul, and he wrote the poem containing these lines:

'Mid all the traffic of the ways,
Turmoils without, within,
Make in my heart a quiet place
And come and dwell therein;

A little shrine of quietness,
All sacred to thyself,
Where thou shalt all my soul possess—
And I may find myself.

A Mother's Devotion

A mother's love reaches its climax when it is love for an unfortunate child. We have a powerful illustration of that in Dickens' *Barnaby Rudge*—that unfortunate child, or rather now a child in mind. For him his mother offered up the prayer: "O Thou who hast taught me such deep love for this one remnant of the promise of a happy life, out of whose affliction even perhaps the comfort springs that he is ever a relying, loving child to me, never growing old or cold at heart, but needing my care and duty in his manly strength as in his cradle time, help him in his darkened walk through this sad world, or he is doomed and my poor heart is broken."

A good mother's love never fails. John G. Paton, the great missionary to the South Seas, tells of a neighbor in the Scottish village where he was born, Janet Jardine, who had a wayward and vanished son in the "far country." Every night she would get down on her knees and pray for his return. Then she would fling the door open and, peering into the darkness, would cry: "Come hame, my boy Walter. Your mother wearies sair." And every morning at daybreak she would hobble up to the top of the little round hill called Corbie Dyke and, gazing with tear-filled eyes toward the south for the form of her returning boy, would pray to the Lord to keep him safe.—*Clarence E. Macartney, First Presbyterian Church, Pittsburgh, Pa.*

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THE EDITOR'S PAGE

The Event of the Month

THE greatest peacetime undertaking in history by one nation in coming to the aid of other nations is the European Recovery Program. It involves the expenditure in one year of $5,300,000,000 by American taxpayers to provide relief and to rebuild the devastated economy of western Europe, together with the prospect of the repetition of this (or an even larger) annual expenditure for the next four or five years. The motivation of this prodigious project was a mixture of humanitarian, economic and strategic considerations. Humanitarian—because the appeal of human distress has always found a ready response in the American heart. Economic—because Europe will be a liability to the rest of the world until her industries and agriculture are restored to an autonomous level of production and trade. Strategic—because the indefinite continuance of the present chaos is a standing invitation to communism and Russia to take over one by one the nations of western Europe as those of eastern Europe have already been taken over. These are the intertwined motives behind the Marshall plan. The first and second are self-justifying. The third has had to run the gantlet of fierce controversy and is still regarded with profound concern as provocative of war rather than a bulwark against it. The opposition argued that the designs of Russia will not be checked by a restored economy in these nations, but that our aid will only make the prizes more tempting. There is, however, some relief to our baffled intelligence in the knowledge that the die has been cast, that the huge project is now a *fait accompli*. Perhaps the progress of its development will open up favorable opportunities, now unforeseen, for diplomacy to deal directly with Russia.

The Marshall Plan Goes Into Effect

The Book of the Month

PRAYER AND THE COMMON LIFE. *By Georgia Harkness. Abingdon-Cokesbury Press,* $2.50.

I HAVE NOT selected this book merely because its author received one-half of a $7,500 award from the publishers for a book that would "accomplish the greatest good for the Christian faith and for Christian living." The distinguished committee of judges certainly made no mistake in giving the prize to it together with *The Religion of Maturity* by John W. Bowman, which I have not yet read. My reason for selecting it is that it is the most *sensible* book on prayer I have read in a long time. Dr. Harkness writes at the ground level, so to speak. But she does not do her thinking at the ground level! Underneath her writing you sense a profound awareness of the theological and psychological implications of everything she says. But her style of writing is characterized by a certain gritty common-senseness that commends her book to the average reader as well as to the most sophisticated. Dr. Harkness has definitely in view the sad fact that the pragmatic mind of our generation is not too much concerned with the more intimate subjects which have to do with Christian piety. In her own words, she admits that "to counsel prayer to the rootless, restless twentieth century man or woman is often to talk of something that sounds like moonshine." But she comes nearer meeting such people on their own ground and speaking effectually "to their condition" than any other modern writer I know.

A Thought for the Month

THOSE of us who, throughout the long period which Henry van Dyke once called "an age of doubt," have held more or less doggedly to our faith are of all men most fortunate. If the secrets of our hearts were laid bare, I imagine that many of us who have been preaching the gospel for the past generation have, times without number, fled from our pulpits beseeching God to save us from becoming ourselves castaways. Behind the confident words of argument and appeal which we have uttered for the edification of others, our people little knew what struggles were going on in our own hearts to keep a living faith. Ofttimes, no doubt, it was our sense of responsibility for the faith of others that kept us from confessing outright how scant and how precariously held was our own. Yet we kept on, trusting our hopes in spite of the "facts," believing where we could not prove. It was the firm-tread march of science that troubled us, as it troubled others. Each successive advance of biblical scholarship, of psychology of religion and of the physical and social sciences seemed to take another trench and to make ultimately inevitable the capitulation of the Christian faith to the messianic claims of scientific knowledge. But, thank God, we have outlived that struggle and that danger. We are passing into a new dispensation. Science is today engaged in a revolutionary reversal of its attitude. Since its consummate achievement in atom fissioning, it has become profoundly aware of its own insufficiency as a world savior, and is now actually appealing for help in saving mankind from scientific knowledge! The preacher of today can go into his pulpit with new confidence in his own soul and a firm conviction in the power of his gospel.

The Minister's Own Faith

Charles Clayton Morrison

Not Pillars, But Pioneers

By IVAN H. HAGEDORN

By the good hand of our God upon us, they brought us a man of understanding. Ezra 8:18.

MEMORIAL DAY bids us think upon our past. We are called to appreciation for the great men and women who so largely shaped our destiny. As our minds dwell upon our George Washingtons, Abraham Lincolns and Woodrow Wilsons of days gone by, we mourn the disappearance of truly great men from our public life today. Soon the great American parties will hold their conventions for the purpose of choosing the candidates to be presented to the American people for election to the highest office in our nation. We wonder if the men who aspire to this high honor are of presidential timber. When Ezra was organizing the people for the return to Jerusalem, he was able to say: "By the good hand of our God upon us, they brought us a man of understanding."

The world is lame today, and this lameness is due in no small degree to the shortage of strong leaders. Undoubtedly, we live in earthquake times. A new source of energy has been discovered, which if used in war will totally obliterate civilization. We need as leaders today not merely pillars, but pioneers. I remember an old deacon who at prayer meeting invariably closed his testimony with the words: "I may not be making much progress, but I'm established." Not long afterward, this pillar of the church was found in his sulky, the wheels of which were up to the hubs in mud. A fellow churchman, who had often listened to his testimony, could not resist saying with a smile: "Well, Deacon, you're not making much progress, but you are established." We know that Jesus did not rest his case with the pillars of the church of his day. Rather he sought out pioneers.

Everywhere the lack of great leadership is apparent. Nowhere is this lack more in evidence than in the Christian church. While the church is charged with the greatest and grandest task ever committed to man, the task is done poorly and inefficiently because our leadership is poor in vision, knowledge and devotion. Yet if we are to have any hope at all for the future of our world, the basis of our hope must be in the Christian church. Out of the church have come the men and women who in the days gone by have inaugurated the movements which in turn have purified, invigorated and extended not only the church but the life of the whole world.

Opportunities are greatest when human needs are greatest. Our day, then, offers unprecedented opportunities. When Gandhi was asked what particular qualification would be needed in the man who would lead our weary world out of the bog, he replied unhesitatingly, "He must be a man who is conscious of God twenty-four hours of every day." I believe this mystic of India was entirely right. The world needs the training, the dedication and the genius of the saint rather than the military leader, the business man or the professional man, to lift it to the higher level. This truth lays great pressure upon the church, for naturally the church is expected to produce that quality of leadership.

Only with Christian leadership can we hope to build a lasting society. Only when Christian virtues are carried to a higher degree, and produced on a wider scale than ever before, can that vision of a social order embraced in that phrase "the Kingdom of God" be brought into existence. Thirty or so years ago, the Titanic sank. Shortly afterward, one of our American newspapers carried two drawings. One was of the giant liner, ripped open like a fragile toy, and underneath was the caption: "The weakness of man, the supremacy of nature." By its side was the other drawing. It was the likeness of a certain distinguished passenger, stepping back to give his place in the last lifeboat to a woman and her child. Underneath it was the caption: "The weakness of nature, the supremacy of man." This is the high task committed to the Christian church—to produce that higher type of manhood and womanhood which will reveal the ability to rise above the worldliness which swirls about us. Christian character is the goal and glory of the church.

Charles Beard has called our attention to the fact that in times of tumult and crisis, it is not the formally educated and polished man, but some unknown, untrained man who takes hold of affairs, leads and makes history on a colossal scale. Not pillars, but pioneers! The church must build her leadership from ordinary material. From the common ranks emerge the greatest leaders. We remember all too well that at a critical hour in our own history, the people passed over university men and laid the task upon the shoulders of Abraham Lincoln. "Honest Abe," the humble railsplitter, displayed the wisdom needed for his day and task.

I

The church must bring her leaders *face to face with Calvary.* In these days, we hear very little from our pulpits about conversion. Conversion seems to have become a very unpopular word. It would appear that many of our clergy have dropped it from their vocabularies altogether. However, in my own mind I can see no hope for the future of the church or of the world unless we have a soundly converted leadership. Only changed men will change life. Youth must be brought face to face with Calvary. They are our future leaders. And it is at Calvary that hearts are melted, passions are enkindled, and the dynamic given to bring the world back to God.

The beginning of the cure for the ailments afflicting the body of the church is to stand on Golgotha and permit its great lessons to stab deep into our souls. We mourn the confusion in the minds of our youth. How can it be otherwise if in our church schools we have men and women in charge of our classes who are confessedly without knowledge of the subjects they present? Parents would be quickly aroused if this chronic condition obtained in our public school system. What greater incentive is there for the searching of the Scriptures and the learning of the eternal truths than to be confronted with the love so amazing, so divine, which demands our lives, our souls, our all? We want a laity who will swing in line to conduct the every-member visitation, who will know what the church stands for. How are we to secure such intelligence and consecration? How are we to get leaders who will better prepare themselves for the work of the church? Count Zinzendorf would trace all of his Christian activity to that day when in a little church he stood before a picture of the crucifixion and read the words: "All this have I done for thee. What hast thou done for Me?"

The names of the men and women who have been able in their day and generation to set the eyes of the world toward a new day have been men and women in whose lives ease, comfort and security played a very insignificant part. The men and women before whose shrines the world bends low have been those in whose hearts the cross was furrowed deep. The cross stands for sacrifice and service. I like a certain story which comes to us out of medieval days. There once came to the cell of a saintly monk one whose mien was lordly and majestic. "Who art thou?" asked the saint. "I am Jesus," was the answer. There was something in the voice and manner of the visitor, however, which made the monk suspect that he was not the holy one he claimed to be. "Where is the print of the nails?" he asked. Instantly, the stranger turned and fled away. It was Satan, not Christ. And, surely, it is true that those men who would lead in the Lord's work must bear in their hands the print of the nails.

II

The church must build *high idealism* into her leaders. They must have that spiritual sensitivity which will make them alive to the infallible voice of their souls. In momentous days and critical times, that is the only voice which can give the necessary guidance. Hence the soul must be winged of God. A leader must have the insight to know what a nation really lives by. Those who have succeeded in moving people to higher living have all alike communed with their souls and have dared to follow their high call. Certainly, we cannot even remotely imagine anyone instilling in his followers the warmth and glow of a better and happier world than the present one, unless he himself travels upon a high level.

Havelock Ellis said: "To be a leader of men, one must turn one's back on men." This great thinker knew that the true leader must stand at the front of his followers, his face toward the dawn. Warren G. Harding looked backward. His cry was, "Back to normalcy." It is little wonder that his years in the presidency were marked by striking failure. On the other hand, the man who preceded him in the White House, Woodrow Wilson, had caught a vision of a world in which all nations might live in peace, and he would lead his followers forward to it. Even dire defeat failed to extinguish that hope. He once said: "I would rather be defeated in a cause which one day will succeed, than be victorious in a cause which one day will be defeated." One is happy to recall that Woodrow Wilson was a son of the parsonage, and one who respected and honored the church, from which he had received so much.

A leader will always be stronger on action than on words. The Kingdom of God is not an ideal that will be talked into existence. The vision of an economy which will avoid both extremes—on the one hand the instruments of production controlled by a few, and on the other nobody sitting under his own vine and fig tree—will require sweat and blood to realize. The vision of a country making possible the equalization of educational opportunities, so that every boy and girl whose record warrants it may have the opportunity of a higher education, will demand more than words. It will require a battle. The vision of a world fulfilling the words of Isaiah: "They shall beat their swords into plough-shares, and their spears into pruning-hooks: nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more." Ideals must become, in our leaders, programs for definite action.

III

The church must build *character* into her leaders. Someone has said, "A pebble has the force of a bullet if a David is behind it." A true leader will hold his beliefs with confidence, not veering with every wind or taking the stamp of every man he talks to, or yielding to every pressure brought upon him. His followers will know that the things he believes on Sunday, he will stand for seven days a week. Real leaders are armed with clear aims and consistent philosophies. Only such can afford guidance.

Along with convictions must go courage. Convictions are of little value apart from this quality. The Kingdom of God will not arrive on the wings of a storm. It is consummated only by slow, deliberate action. We all know that there is scarcely a church where the cry is not raised, "Let us have more action." Usually what is needed is courage. A leader will be willing to take full responsibility for his actions. He will stand ready to bare his breast to his fate; for the truth that he holds, he will even dare to die.

The proof that you believe what you declare
Is that you still stand firm though throngs pass by;
Rather cry truth a lifetime to void air
Than flatter listening millions with one lie!

One of the secrets of Paul's life was, as one lad expressed it, "He never knew when he was licked." This ought to be the mental equipment of everyone who aspires to leadership. In my ministry, I have often observed how frequently one fails who has every other essential to leadership except the ability to see it through. The discouragements of the first few months down him. This is most unfortunate and is a sorry blow to the work in the local church.

IV

The church must build *Christian personality* into her leaders. I am aware that there are those who say that this is impossible, since personality is something we either have or do not have, and cannot be changed any more than the color of one's eyes. But as Christians, we believe that "all things are possible with God." There is a sentence which beautifully sets forth the personality of Jesus—"He filled all the house." When this Christ lives in a man, it is as if a light has been turned on in his soul.

It was an interesting experience at college to watch each incoming freshman class. What an inchoate mass of unknown individuals! No one could possibly prophesy with any degree of confidence who would be the leaders among them. Then, as the months and years passed, the leaders would emerge. Each year brings to the Sunday school a fresh batch of young folks. They are enrolled in the respective classes. They are entered into the group of catechumens. Christ can be given them. And with this achieved, the great work of developing personality is accomplished.

Each of us has in him something unique, something unlike that possessed by anyone else. When Christ enters the life, that gift is hallowed and glorified. Browning urges us: "Be yourself, imperial, plain and true." When you are that plus Christ—then, as we say, "You have something there." A striking line was found in a story by Margaret E. Sangster. The story is told of a man who was looking at a girl, the latter unconscious of his presence. Soon he said softly to another onlooker, "What a pretty soul she has!" Commenting on this, Miss Sangster made this observation: "Often we say to one another, 'What a pretty frock,' or 'What an adorable coat,' or 'What an exquisite gown!' But we seldom say, 'What a pretty soul—what a charming heart!' " Yet the inner life is the thing of highest value. Said an old and wise writer: "Keep thy heart with all diligence; for out of it are the issues of life."

Furthermore, when one receives Jesus Christ, he is bound to espouse those high causes which brought him to earth. And when one loses himself in a great cause, much of that which was obnoxious because of selfishness drops away. When the youth asked Longfellow how best to succeed in life, the poet made answer: "Tie yourself to some great, even though unpopular cause." When David Livingstone presented himself before the board of the London Missionary Society, there was little about him to inspire their accepting him as a missionary. But as he grew in grace, and in the knowledge and love of God, that man of the world, Henry Stanley, was so drawn to him that he was obliged to confess: "I knew there was a God, because I knew Livingstone." It may take time, growth, liberty and courage to become a Christian personality, but it can be done.

V

The church must build an *appreciation of the past* into her leaders. And yet, withal, to develop in them a daring to follow paths never before trodden. Dorothy Thompson says: "Without change, there can be no growth. But without tradition, there can be no civilization." She suggests that changes must be new branches on an ancient stem, and she calls attention to Thomas Jefferson, the great friend of France, and one of our early Revolutionary leaders, who, while he sympathized with the objectives of the French Revolution, became disgusted with its excesses and did not want it duplicated on American soil. He had no patience with its agents here, and recognized the fact that violent overturns are social catastrophes.

Edmund Burke once expressed the idea, when he commended leaders in public life who had "the disposition to conserve and the ability to improve." Also, John Bright, when he said: "The past should glide safely into the future, with as little loss as possible." Ministers coming to a new charge often break their necks, as well as destroy a work painstakingly built up through preceding years, by having the complex of wishing to change everything. The real leader will conserve the gains made, recognizing that unless there is such conservation there will be nothing to improve.

The world changes rapidly and radically. The leader must interpret the signs of the times. The element of the prophetic cannot be absent from leadership. The trends must be noted and the program for meeting them prepared. This ability is sometimes the result of pure vision, and sometimes it is the conclusion reached after careful study. Mankind has ever had to walk an unknown way into an untried future. Posterity delights to honor those intrepid souls who lead the way. How close must be the walk of the leader with God! Only God knows the end from the beginning. God is willing to whisper his secrets to him who loves him and trusts him.

How shall we start to develop leaders? That is indeed a personal question. Emil Brunner, the Swiss theologian, while visiting this country some years ago emphasized the importance of each minister surrounding himself with a small group of forward-looking youths. Into them he would pour the vision and passion of his own heart. The true man of God will not only sustain spiritually his people, but will

select and train Christian leaders for the future. Sunday school teachers may well follow out the same plan with their classes. Admittedly, there is nothing new about this idea. Christ used it. Francis of Assisi used it. Ignatius Loyola used it. There has hardly been a successful venture into the spiritual or moral realm undertaken without a leader rediscovering it. Jesus said, "The children of this world are wiser in their day and generation than the children of light." Business leaders see the wisdom of this method. They take promising youth, giving them long courses in the business—two months in the shipping room, two months in the credit department, etc. At last, these youths know the business thoroughly. Why does not the church see the wisdom of this method?

On Memorial Day we must give thought not only to those who stand out in front, but also to that great army of common folk whose loyal confidence so often accounts for the strong qualities so respected and revered in their leaders. Someone has said with truth: "To have a noble poet, there must be a noble audience." It is just as true that to have a great leader, there must be loyal followers. Great men do not fail because too much trust is placed in them. Many fall because their followers have wavered.

Surging waters today tear at the dam of the past. Our country has been caught up in the swirling stream. However, with strong leadership and true followers, we may yet so direct the course that healing will result to the nations. It is futile to call upon our Benjamin Franklins, our James Madisons, our Stonewall Jacksons, or any others of the great men of our yesterdays. It is for each one of us to think of himself as a little United States and each in his own way determine to exemplify the faith, the courage, the sincerity, the wisdom and the humility by which alone greatness may be reflected upon our land. Nurse Edith Cavell, just before her death, said: "I'm glad to be dying for England. Other women are sacrificing more—husbands, brothers, sons. I have only my own life to give." And you and I have a life to give, too.

C. S. Lewis, in his book *The Great Divorce,* says: "There are only two kinds of people in the end: those who say to God 'Thy will be done,' and those to whom God says in the end, 'Thy will be done'."

The choice is before us.

I DO PERCEIVE that whilst everything around me is ever-changing and ever-dying, there is, underlying all that change, a living power that is changeless, that holds all together, that creates, dissolves and recreates. That informing power and spirit is God. I see it as purely benevolent, for I can see that, in the midst of death, life persists; in the midst of untruth, truth persists; in the midst of darkness, light persists. Hence I gather that God is life, truth and light. He is love. He is the supreme good.

MOHANDAS GANDHI.

Christ for the World!

By IRA W. LANGSTON

Text: *I Corinthians* 3:10-23.

IT IS a strange and paradoxical thing for a Christian nation to appropriate hundreds of thousands of dollars for the seeking out and suppression of the evangelists of a new religion. If this matter were not so serious it would be ludicrous. Behold the leaders of the greatest nation on earth quaking in their boots because a relatively small number of well disciplined men and women are advocating a new way of life. I say this would be funny if it were not full of atomic explosiveness.

It would be funny because the leaders of the Roman empire behaved exactly as our leaders are doing when the early Christians began to infiltrate their land. Nineteen hundred years ago the leaders of Rome were saying: "What are we to do? Those who are turning the world upside down are infesting this city also. How can we stop these Christians?" They did not refer to them as fifth columnists because the term had not been originated. But the leaders of a decadent Roman empire did tremble in their boots before a handful of men and women who had only a vital faith to sustain them.

As we look back upon that era we realize that the threat to the Roman empire was not from the powerless intruders. The threat was in the decadence and weakness of the empire itself. It no longer had a positive faith to motivate and sustain it. It had a huge army which had nothing worthwhile for which to fight.

WE HAVE EVERYTHING BUT FAITH!

Again I say unto you that it is almost funny to see the beneficiaries of that feeble band of Christians, now rich with worldly goods, powerful in the material of arms, but quaking before an insignificant band of zealots. It is tragic because these zealots are supplied and encouraged by another great and powerful nation. It is worse because the whole world is dependent upon the outcome of this struggle. And we are lacking the resources of a vital faith. When Christians had nothing but faith, they were fearless and aggressive. Now that they have everything but faith, they tremble before an organized mob!

Recent events have shocked the people of the United States into an awareness of the seriousness of the current world situation. Already we hear voices calling for another "Crusade"—another holy war. That is not the answer! War may come, but just as many wise warnings were raised before the last war

so also we should hear them now. A peaceful world is not built upon the force of arms. War is all too often an escape from the facing of the fundamental problems of life itself. We must not fight a war to maintain a faithless, decadent culture!

There is a basic conflict between Christianity and communism. I doubt that there can ever be a peaceful compromise between two religions whose fundamental approaches to man and God are so incompatible. But the issues that are dragging us ever closer to war at this moment are not religious. The people of the United States, the Christians of the Western world, do not have enough religion to fight for. The issues that threaten the world with the third great war are political and economic.

NOT A CONFLICT OF RELIGIONS

Europe, according to the fairest observers that I have heard and read, is just as fearful of the American system of unrestricted free enterprise as it is of the Russian system of communism. Europe has already suffered the ultimate under the aegis of unlimited big business in fascism. It has seen the enslavement of its neighbors under the dictatorship of the proletariat. Europe does not want either of these modern monsters astride her neck. She has not the native resources to indulge the luxury of our kind of capitalism. Europe fears the United States because she has had no assurance that American domination will not ultimately mean her return to the enslavement of big business. She fears communism because she knows that this will mean domination by a Russian dictatorship.

So the forces that drag us toward war are not those of two incompatible religions. Communism as a new religion may have the vitality to wage war. Christianity has not demonstrated such a vitality in more than a generation. Let us not, therefore, deceive ourselves. Nay, let us not be deceived. Until Christianity commands a greater role in the lives and measures of the people of this country, it cannot be the motivating power behind another world conflict.

We Christians have had more than two years to lead out in a program for the world that looked toward the building of the Kingdom of God on earth. If the Christians of the first generation had had such an opportunity things would not now be in the condition they are in. Those early Christians were looked upon as dangerous men and women. They were referred to as people who were turning the world upside down. The only religious group in the world today that merits such recognition is the communist group. Christians are fat and listless, wealthy and careless about their faith—that is, those who have not already been overwhelmed by paganism. The only Christians in the world today who are physically able to challenge the communists are we of the United States and we are more concerned with the "American way" than we are with the Christian faith. Most of us would fight for the American way. Few will even give for the propagation of the faith. We are looking and behaving like a decadent generation that is tottering before the fall.

ASHAMED OF JESUS CHRIST!

There are a number of reasons for this. In the first place, we are a generation that is ashamed of Jesus Christ. I say this with all the humiliation that a proud man can bear. For a generation or more we have spoken in modulated tones about being religious in our own way. We have quietly acknowledged our fondness for the church, but have modestly disclaimed being real Christians. For some strange reason it has become far too commonly accepted that only weak women and feeble men need Jesus Christ. The strong among us have been embarrassed to admit that we love and need and serve Christ the Lord. There is not a communist alive today who has been so weak, so soft-spoken, so apologetic for his faith. This new religion has kept its ranks purged of all such poor specimens. Communism is like Gideon's army; it has been purged and repurged until only the pure in heart survive to wear the name. The Communist party has "that lean and hungry look" which forecasts such promise in the world of sports. Its members are ready, willing and able to sacrifice for their faith.

We Christians, on the other hand, who wrestle with the communists for the soul of the world, woo and cajole all those who are not positively unkind to us into the ranks of our forces. Christianity has become too closely identified with things as they are. All those who are not arrogantly aloof are included. Christ will never win the world with such a fat and unfaithful lot as this. In our scripture lesson the apostle Paul tells us: "Other foundation can no man lay than that which is laid, which is Christ Jesus." If we would launch a crusade for a Christian world, we must first slough off this excess baggage. We must tighten our ranks to include only those whose foundations are sure. Only they can take Christ to the world, for only they have the Christ to take.

In the second place, we have, in our timidity, undertaken to substitute an ethic for a Lord. I cannot escape the conviction that the major sin of the past generation has been this. For forty years or more the preachers of the Christian gospel have talked long and loud about the ethic of Jesus but have remained silent about the Living Christ.

NOT AN ETHIC, BUT A FAITH

In the eighth chapter of Romans, the apostle tells us: "The carnal mind is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can it be: for they that are in the flesh cannot please God." And yet we have spent a generation teaching and preaching exactly the opposite. Men and women tell you that they try to live according to the teachings of Jesus but they are not really Christians and do not even belong to the church. They are a seasonal fruit being harvested from the plantings of the church. We have emphasized the ethics of Jesus but have neglected the Living

Christ. We see from these fruits that the carnal mind indeed cannot be subject to God's law. A mind filled with the things of this world will be subject to the things of this world, no matter what the ethical doctrines it tells about. The Christian ethic will not work without the Christian God. Christianity is not a behavior pattern that can be sampled at will. It is a religion that changes the whole center of existence of all those who accept it. "Other foundation can no man lay than that which is laid"—Jesus Christ the Lord.

Many times I have expressed my concern for those who suffer from unforgiven sins. How can they find forgiveness? How can we find forgiveness from anything? A broken promise can be forgiven only by him to whom the promise is made. A broken ethic can be forgiven only by the Lord who revealed the ethic. We have a generation that is generally convinced that the ethic of Jesus is the law of life. People of our generation cannot possibly live up to that ethic. They fall short. They make mistakes. They sin, if you please, and since they do not know the Living Christ, they cannot therefore find forgiveness. No wonder they are reticent about propagating this gospel. The major contribution that it has made to many of them is a serious mental disorder. The world needs a savior, not an uprooted ethic. The Christ we must take to the world is the Living Christ. He is the loving Christ who made the rules and at the same time made available the cure for us weaklings who break them. It is a criminal shame to hold aloft before the people of the world an ethic that cannot be wholly met, thus depriving them of the Savior who will redeem them when they fall.

The Christ for the world is the foundation of a new order. He is a new way of life. But he is more than these: He is the Son of God, the Living Christ, the Savior who died and rose again from the grave that the world through him might be redeemed. This is the Christ for whom the world pleads. It is the Christ who is not subject to the carnal, the materialistic mind, and can be followed only by those who have been completely converted and are wholly eager to receive his salvation. He is worth suffering for. He is worth dying for. He is worth living for!

NO HOPE FOR THE FUTURE

Finally, Christianity has faltered because we have taken the reward out of its teaching. This was the very thing that most surely sustained the courage of those early Christians. For more than a generation we have been building the Kingdom of Heaven on earth. This Kingdom was almost as ridiculous as the one we reacted against. We all laughed at the old preachers who promised "pie in the sky, by and by." We ridiculed the "streets of gold" and the "pearly gates." We said that we wanted our reward here and now. So we launched our Christian works program. We set out to put two cars in every garage, two chickens in every pot, two doctors on every corner. We were bringing the Kingdom of God down to where the people lived. We were building a brave new world!

Then all of a sudden these young Christians whom we had nurtured on these false dreams draped themselves with planes and tanks and went off on the bloodiest mission ever accomplished by man. How did we feel? Their "brave new world" was molten beneath their feet and they did not have even the hope of "pie in the sky." They had cut their spiritual teeth on public health and sanitation. They had grown their Christian sinews on social security and education. Their hope was in the progress of earthly things. They were less well fortified than those generations misguided by our zealous forefathers.

The Christ that is and that this world needs at this moment is not limited to current social programs. Life as he revealed it is more than public works and temporal human welfare. Life is eternal and man is immortal and "while it doth not yet appear what we shall be like" when we depart from this earth, we have the bright hope and the certain faith that all will be well with us and our reward will be commensurate with our success in our devotion to him, "for we shall see him as he is." This is the Christ the world needs. No less will be acceptable. The youth of our land cannot even believe that the Kingdom of God will come upon the earth in our time. How much less can they whose whole lives have been spent in misery and squalor be expected to thrive on such a faith!

A CULTURE BASED ON GOLD

Christ for the world! The world for Christ! A war looms up on the horizon! But be not deceived, O ye of little faith! That may be the anti-christ we see moving his guns and planes in our direction, but those forces that are dragging us toward war are not Christ and his cross. The foundation of a Christian culture is not made of "gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay or stubble." The foundation of a Christian culture is Jesus Christ—and ours is based on gold! The faith that motivated our forefathers when they built this nation is no longer in us. And under God we must not fight an atomic war just to perpetuate a decadent culture. A culture that is not motivated by a vital faith is decadent. When Rome's passion for law and order died, Rome died. When our faith is gone we too will be "goners."

A war of capitalism against communism is not the Christ against the anti-christ. It is a struggle between two kinds of materialism! A war between capitalistic materialism and communistic materialism is a revolution in hell and the jaws of death gape wide for both their houses.

It is a strange thing, I say, when a so-called Christian nation appropriates large sums of money for defense. Christianity cannot be on the defensive. Christianity is by its very nature aggressive. The rulers of Rome learned that. "What shall we do?" they said. "Those who are turning the world upside down are infesting our city also." When in modern

times has anyone feared a band of Christians? When in our time have Christians turned anything upside down?

There ought to be a war, all right. But God forbid that we allow two pagan materialisms to chew the human race to bits between them. Rather let the Christian community mount the cross of Christ on its mast and sail with courage into every pagan force. Let us turn this Godless world upside down. Let us crusade against sin. And I agree that the pagan forces of communism would be second on our list—after we got the anti-christ off our own necks. If we would save ourselves, we must rebuild our foundation!

WE MUST MOVE FORWARD, OR DIE!

It would be a thrilling thing to send a hundred thousand Christians to Russia to organize "cells" and propagate the gospel of the Living Christ. I do not mean under-cover agents for American capitalism. I mean Christians who would denounce slavery because God hates slaves. I mean Christians who would denounce statism because statism is idolatry and God hates idols. I mean Christians who would preach brotherly love and Christ's salvation because God sent his only begotten Son that through him the world might be saved.

I wonder if the hierarchy of communism is so faithless and insecure that so small a force could wreak such havoc among them as the early Christians did in Rome. Those early Christians truly turned the world upside down. They had no powerful weapons. They had only a vital faith and a firm foundation.

The communists in our world are the ones who are turning the world upside down. Christ died for this world and the communists are turning it upside down. Are we such poor and decadent Christians that all we can do is resist? Must we do all the trembling and defending? Christ sent his followers into the world to capture the world for him. Christianity can no more stand still than can communism. The world is the goal of each. Christians, we must move or forfeit our faith!

I wonder what I would do for Christ if I were in Russia today. Would I organize a "cell" of Christians? Would I risk my neck for Christ? What would you do for Christ in Russia today? What would you do for Christ in China today? What would you do for Christ in Europe today? *What are you doing for Christ today?*

RELIGION is the vision of something that stands beyond, behind and within the passing flux of immediate things; something which is real and yet waiting to be realized; something which is a remote possibility, and yet the greatest of present facts; something which gives meaning to all that passes, and yet eludes apprehension; something whose possession is the final good, and yet is beyond all reach; something which is the ultimate ideal and the hopeless quest.

ALFRED N. WHITEHEAD.

A Military Emergency Declared on Jesus Christ

By H. GORDON BIRKY

WE DID NOT celebrate Easter in 1945. Religious services were not held aboard our ship. A military emergency had been declared by the commanding officer. We were not on the firing line. We were awaiting orders to proceed into dry dock. Going into dry dock is an all-hands evolution, for as soon as the ship settles on its keel blocks and the water is pumped from the dock, all available men go over the side to clean down the hull of the ship with scrapers and steel brushes. Within the bounds of military authority, taking a ship into dry dock can reasonably be construed as a military emergency. Then all other things are put aside, including the worship of God and the celebration of the discovery of the risen Christ. It should be said to the credit of the commanding officer that such a contingency occurred only twice in two years spent aboard his vessel. Nonetheless we did not celebrate Easter in 1945. A military emergency had been declared. Our men spent Easter Day cleaning the stinking barnacles from the sides of the ship's steel hull.

Throughout the centuries of Christendom men have been calling military emergencies on the worship of Jesus Christ. With their voices they have pledged their allegiance to the Prince of Peace, but have lifted their hands to the slaughter of their brother man. Through their ignorance, their selfishness, and principally through their egotism, they have declared moratoriums on the ethics of Christ. They have claimed his salvation, but ignored his commands; they have received his blessings, but bypassed his moral judgments; they have worshiped at his altar, but have dodged the injunctions of his life and will.

EASTER AND THE 'COLD WAR'

The lights are burning late again in the Kremlin and the Pentagon. In their little ego, men are raising their fists once more in the face of God. The Easter Parade of 1948 is being marched to military music. We refer to it as "the year of our Lord," but flaunt across its days the threat of atomic might. Christians march in parade to Jerusalem under the sights of Arab guns. Ether waves are jammed with threats and

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This sermon was preached on Easter Day of this year at First Methodist Church, Huntington Park, Calif., where Mr. Birky serves as minister of education.

counter-threats. Friends are enemies; enemies strangely friends. Cold war is declared. Someone wants fourteen billion dollars for war machines and three hundred forty-nine thousand men *to keep the peace*. For the thousandth time in the Christian era the simple injunctions of Jesus are foresworn, and men, swollen with poisonous ego, pomp and pride, prepare another march to Calvary.

Easter should be a joyous season. It should be the dawn after a black Friday. It should be the resurrection following the crucifixion. It should be hope after pessimism; life after death. But in celebrating the incident of Easter and the Christ who said, "I came that they may have life, and may have it abundantly," a thinking person cannot close his eyes to the fact that men are celebrating Easter this season with no such thoughts in mind, at least not the men who make the decisions which affect the peace of the world. It appears likely that they are planning the crucifixion of the human race rather than thinking of life eternal. Even as men in the long ago plotted and planned and condemned to death Jesus of Nazareth, so forces of power and might are being poised to bring new calvaries, new marches of death.

WHY JESUS WAS CRUCIFIED

What happened to Jesus so long ago? We say he was crucified; that he was hanged upon a cross. We ascribe the atrocity to a group of Roman soldiers and a gang of high class religious culprits who dealt, Quisling-fashion, behind the scenes with Roman officials. A reading of the trial of Jesus indicates that two reasons were set forth for his crucifixion. First, he advocated new religious ideas, and second, he held a minority political opinion. History bristles with examples of what happens to men who have new ideas or hold minority political views. In general the same sort of things occur—extra-legal trials, inquisitions, purges, investigations. They are aimed to discredit the man involved, oftentimes to the point of final liquidation.

Some men, well known only because they were adversely associated with Jesus, made up the investigating committee that sat in judgment during the first Easter week. They were Caiaphas, Pilate and Herod. Ordinarily these three were at one another's throats, but the plotting of evil men against the innocent often produces strange associations. None of them were interested in the truth. Their trials were amazing and amusing travesties of justice.

MOCK TRIAL BEFORE CAIAPHAS

Caiaphas got to him first. He produced a parade of witnesses, but, as is usually true in such trials, lying witnesses have difficulty making a case. The investigation sputtered and seethed with confusion. The chief investigator could find little against Jesus, but eventually two men testified that they had heard him say something about destroying the Temple and building it again in three days. You can imagine, as I can, how seriously they pretended to take this charge. Jesus was the type so apt to destroy the Temple! But so it is—the more absurd the testimony the more arrogant and pompous the investigators have to be.

Jesus was soon on their blacklist. They addressed some questions to him, but he refused to answer his investigators. We read that "he held his peace, and answered nothing." It wasn't testimony they were interested in, anyway; only an opportunity for condemnation. And Jesus was never the sort to make a fuss about things. Furthermore, it would have been a futile waste of speech. Jesus knew that. They did not want the truth. It may be doubtful whether they could have understood the truth. Certainly their minds were closed to truth. Jesus had conceived of life and religion on a level above their understanding. His philosophy cut directly across their entrenched privileges. He believed in the supreme value of all human personality. He drew no lines of distinction. He had no class-consciousness. His living faith was based on total justice. He was impatient only with pride and the pretense of righteousness. He was quick to forgive and ready to help and to heal. He had declared his mission to be the preaching of "good tidings to the poor": the proclaiming of "release to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind," and the setting "at liberty them that are bruised."

That was too simple for the Jerusalem crowd. To accomplish it would have required vast adjustments on their part. It was too unassuming for the suspicious mind of the military. When the inquisitors of ancient Jerusalem haled Jesus into their courts, he was convicted before he could testify. The trials were simply window-dressing hung up to cloak the purge with the appearance of respectability. He did not answer his inquisitors because he could not argue against closed minds.

FALSE CHARGES BEFORE PILATE

The second member of the investigating committee was Pilate. In the appearance before Pilate, his accusers brought three charges against Jesus, saying: "We found this man perverting our nation, and forbidding to give tribute to Caesar, saying that he himself is Christ a King."

Now, if it hadn't been to the best interests of the political gang in Jerusalem to play the game with Pilate, they would not have trumped up these charges. The accusation of "perverting the nation" was simply a counterpart of modern witchhunting. They were not afraid that this peasant carpenter from Galilee would pervert their nation. The Romans had it under control, and were keeping it so by military order. It was to their best interests to see the political setup maintained as it was. Second, there were few things they resented more than the paying of tribute-taxes to a foreign oppressor. Why should they have cited that charge against Jesus? It was their national humiliation. They did it because their own case was untenable, and they had to find something about

which Rome could be stirred up. Third, they could not be seriously offended at Jesus' talk of being king, for their people had been looking for a liberator for generations. They were wanting to get rid of Jesus, and these were convenient labels which they believed would impress the Roman governor.

When Pilate apparently found no fault in him, they brought out that well-worn, hackneyed phrase: "he stirs up the people, teaching throughout all Judea and beginning from Galilee even unto this place." If you belong to the gang in office, you don't want to stir up the people. People are dangerous when they get stirred up. So long as they are quietly paying taxes and accepting injustices, let 'em alone. Anyone going up and down the country stirring up the people had better be got rid of quickly. Anyone advocating that you love your enemies is a dangerous character; anyone disagreeing on foreign policy had better be hanged than heard.

But they had gone too far when they mentioned Galilee. Pilate thought he had a way out. Is this man from Galilee? Then take him to Herod. He is under Herod's jurisdiction. Let Herod get rid of him.

THIRD ROUND OF THE TRIALS

So Jesus moves on to Herod's court for the third round of investigation. Oh, Herod was pleased to see him. Things had been a little dull in his section of Jerusalem during the holidays, and here seemed an opportunity for a little amusement. Maybe this Jesus would pass a miracle. Who knows? So he questioned him in many words; but Jesus sat silently and refused to answer, and was held in contempt of Herod's court. So Herod set his deputy sheriffs on him and did his best to make a fool of him and then sent him back to Pilate.

The next time Herod and Pilate chanced to meet they were able to pass a few pleasantries. Usually they were peeved at each other, but Jesus gave them something in common to gossip about.

So it was in the days when Jesus appeared before the investigating committee in Jerusalem. Carl Sandburg's graphic words, in his "To a Contemporary Bunkshooter," are descriptive of their attitude toward Jesus:

> I've read Jesus' words. I know what he said. . . .
> He never came near clean people or dirty people but they felt cleaner because he came along. It was you crowd of bankers and business men and lawyers who hired the sluggers and murderers who put Jesus out of the running.
> I say the same bunch backing you nailed the nails into the hands of this Jesus of Nazareth. He had lined up against him the same crooks and strong-arm men now lined up with you paying your way.
> This Jesus was good to look at, smelled good, listened good. He threw out something fresh and beautiful from the skin of his body and the touch of his hands wherever he passed along.

THE GANG GETS ITS WAY

But the gang was trying to perpetuate itself in office. The Romans needed collaborators, and the gang found it profitable. Jesus was likely to upset the status quo of their business and politics. If anyone comes along with a new idea, or is critical of political institutions, social relationships and economic practices, he is immediately set down as unpatriotic. If he makes any inquiry regarding the race question, or socialized medicine, or public housing, or if he inquires into the wisdom or validity of the foreign policy, he is given a discrediting label. If anyone intimates that the national product has not perfectly and completely achieved, he is branded disloyal, and the gang with barrel staves and swords is called in to see that his attempts at progress are executed on Good Friday at three o'clock in the afternoon.

And so it was with Jesus. The military men took their orders, and marched him up the road to Calvary wth a cross over his shoulders. The commanding officer at Jerusalem declared a military emergency. A moratorium was placed upon the ethics of Christ. His enemies were triumphant. His friends scattered.

DID GOOD TRIUMPH OVER EVIL?

It would be easy to go on and say that on Easter Sunday Christ rose again from the dead; that his friends returned, and that the world again took hope. It would be easy to say that good triumphed over evil. Quite a case can be made for the power of the resurrection in the world, and I believe in that power. Before we try to say it, however, we ought to keep in mind that nearly three hundred years of trial and tribulation elapsed before the Christian religion and the followers of Christ achieved even a legal status in the ancient world. Before Christians could freely gather to worship God as conscience pleased, hundreds of their brothers were to die in the arena and thousands were to compromise or repudiate their Christian beliefs before the inquisitors of ancient Rome. Before they were able openly to declare their allegiance to Christ, Nero was to pierce their broken bodies with stakes as we might spit a fowl for roasting and, planting them in his garden, light them as torches for a cocktail party.

It should also be noted that Christianity grew strong in the ancient Roman world. It achieved as the empire was dying. In the fifth century, the military might and glory of Rome rusted and rotted out. So-called pagan tribes swept down from the north and shattered the last tottering figures of the national government whose representatives sat in judgment at the trial of Jesus four centuries before. The military music that Pilate ordered for the first Easter parade faded away. And Christianity, strong and virile, won the so-called barbarians, not by power and might but by peace and good will.

Many Easter parades have come and gone. Whenever they have been piped to military music, the will of Christ has been delayed. Whenever men have declared a military emergency, the injunctions of Jesus have been denied. "Blessed are the peacemakers . . . be at peace one with another . . . be reconciled to

thy brother . . . go the extra mile . . . love your enemies, and pray for them that persecute you." These are sayings which cannot flourish when men call military emergencies. Such sayings are not set to martial music.

A TIME FOR MARTYRS

The hope of the world lies in the increasing number of men and women who believe so implicitly in these teachings of Jesus that they are putting them into practice. Gandhi, who could accept Christ but could not tolerate the Western world's interpretation of Christianity, has blazed a path to glory, and men who take Christ's ethics as a living principle follow in his train. The Fellowship of Reconciliation numbers among its adherents men and women who have been imprisoned and persecuted because they refused to recognize military emergencies. There are others.

The possible, if not probable, tragedy faces us at this Eastertime—that men who have made the proper gestures of obeisance to Jesus, but have not in their conduct heeded his commands, may destroy the world as we know it before men of peace and good will can join hands around the world in sufficient numbers to save it. Men who are either so unintelligent or so egotistical as to defy the accepted facts of scientific discovery as well as the moral judgments of the human race, can plunge the world into inconceivable darkness.

I wonder today, if Jesus were living in Los Angeles, how many times he would have been called before an investigating committee. I wonder how many brand names would have been labelel on him by now. Certainly he would be accused of the same offenses with which he was accused and brought to trial nearly nineteen hundred years ago. I believe it would be said of him—and I quote from the twenty-third chapter of the Gospel according to Luke—that he was "perverting our nation" and "stirring up the people." . . .

TWO EASTER DAYS

We did not celebrate Easter in 1945. Religious services were not held aboard our ship. A military emergency had been declared by the commanding officer.

We did celebrate Easter in 1946. We were homebound from Japan, only one day out of Pearl Harbor. An Easter sunrise arose over the blue majestic breast of the Pacific ocean. The watery world was drenched with sunshine and the salt spray flung with stinging briskness in the early morning wind. A few white clouds, the seaman's guideposts to islands ahead, stood out against the gorgeous blue canopy of the heavens. Two rocky islands of the Hawaiian archipelago stood low on the horizon. Hope and optimism pervaded the spirit of every man aboard ship—men who had been three weeks at sea; two years from home. Everyone but watch-standers came to church that morning. Sailors were hanging from the rigging and crowding every foot of deck space. Even the "old man" was there. And God was in his heaven; all seemed very right with the world. We believed that the military emergency was over; the moratorium on Christ called off. We sang hymns. Military music was not heard at that Easter parade.

Whether such glorious Easter sunrises will continue to shine upon the human race, or whether the world will turn into a continuous trudge to Calvary, depends on how men of sincere good will begin living by that philosophy of life for which Jesus died so long ago. It is as simple and yet as profound as that.

Family Portrait

By MARVIN B. KOBER

WHEN we use the word *family* or the word *mother,* we are very apt to move into a world of romance and emotion. Mother's Day has so much sentimentality clinging to it that I, personally, like the tendency that is growing within the church to make the day "The Festival of the Christian Home."

There is a difference between sentiment and sentimentality. Someone has said that sentimentality is like opium. It is a deadly drug that excites for a while and then finally deadens. Sentiment is an enriching thing. It is like "the summer rain on the mown meadows of life." If our tribute to motherhood today is sentiment and not sentimentality, it will be because something has happened within the family framework that has profoundly affected our lives.

Let us, therefore, endeavor to equip our souls with nobler insights as we consider this family relationship as it fits within our culture — both religious and otherwise.

FAMILY PORTRAIT IN NAZARETH

Our thoughts turn to a family group found in the village of Nazareth nearly two thousand years ago. Out of the hidden years of the boyhood of one of its members came the greatest character of history; it is provocative to consider some of the influences of that family framework upon the personality of Jesus.

Lenore Coffee and William Joyce Cowan have given us a reverent and well drawn picture of the earthly life of Jesus in the drama from which this sermon takes its title, "Family Portrait." In this play these modern parents have depicted very realistically a human family, with all its problems, its temptations, its joys and sorrows. Through the days of those

years Mary the mother of Jesus moves, contributing much to his character, relating the simple experiences of every day to a sympathetic interpretation of God's love and purpose, and making the beauty of holiness a simple and natural thing. One gets the impression, as the drama unfolds, that "if out of that simple Nazareth home there came the Mighty One, so out of the matrix of life which carries on throughout some such basic pattern, there will come that multitude whom no man can number that go to make up the Family of God," as Horace G. Smith aptly told us in a review of this play before the Evanston College of Preachers some years ago.

THE FAMILY IN OUR DAY

The sociologists, E. W. Burgess and John Dollard, in their various writings, have defined the family as a "unity of interacting personalities, each with a history of its own," and they point out that the modern family is a comparatively recent development in Western culture.

In the long history of mankind there have been four main types of basic family patterns. There was the matriarchal, in which the mother was head of the clan or tribe—honored and revered; her word was law and the males of the group occupied a subordinate position. Burgess and Dollard are not attempting to be facetious when they say that such a pattern is found today only in primitive society.

The second basic pattern of family life is the patriarchal, in which the father very definitely sat at the head of the table. That pattern still exists in the Old World cultures, but in our own culture it probably comes under the heading of wishful thinking on the part of the modern father.

During the past one hundred years of our history, the third basic pattern, the semi-patriarchal, has rapidly merged into the democratic family pattern, and this pattern, is a new thing in the history of the world. To this unity of interacting personalities, each with a history of its own, has been added the phrase—"each with a voice and a mind of its own." In any analysis of this democratic family pattern it must be noted that while something has been added, something has also been lost. Others than sociologists are raising the question as to whether the modern family will disappear with the loss of its historic function.

CHANGING FAMILY PATTERNS

Once the family was self-sustaining or nearly so. A few illustrations will serve to point out the vast changes that have taken place. The tremendous increase in laundries and cleaning establishments, in bakeries and self-service markets, indicates how domestic functions have changed.

In the matter of illness there is a change also, for in the period from 1914 to 1940 hospital beds increased in this country by 80 per cent and today there is a vital need for enlarged facilities in almost every hospital in the country; this need but dramatizes the changing trend in domestic function.

The radio and the movies and other commercialized amusements have taken the place of the recreation which was once obtained within the family framework. As for the teaching of religion, all too often what little the members of the modern family get is obtained by thirty minutes in the church school and that on the average of twice a month; for by and large, religion is not formally taught within the framework of the modern family pattern.

However, Dr. Burgess, the sociologist referred to above, is quite convinced that as long as the family continues to perform three major functions, it will not disappear. These three functions are as follows: ministering to the necessities within the human personality for affection; the rearing of children; and the informal education of those interacting personalities. It is in this last area that certain unmet needs of the modern family are challenging the church.

RELIGION TAUGHT OR CAUGHT

Consider the teaching of religion within the framework of the "Family Portrait." That old aphorism that "religion is caught, not taught" is but a half-truth. Religion has been promoted by four general methods. First, functioning of native traits: Man lifted his face from the clod and felt an inner stirring; "some have called it instinct, others called it God." Second, by franchise or royal decree: Constantine in 325 A.D. is the classic example of one who used this method of propagation of religion. Third, evangelism: For nineteen hundred years this has been the technique for the extension of Protestant as well as Catholic religion. Fourth, by education.

It must be noted that religion consists of certain taught elements; for in any definition of religion there is an object and an attitude toward that object. Now attitudes can be directed. That is, they can be taught. Therefore, education is a valid general method of promoting religion. To be sure, conditions can be set so that the elements of experience can also be caught. Therefore any home, be it modern or ancient, is setting conditions and directing attitudes.

HOMES ARE NOT NEUTRAL

There can be no neutrality here. Either conditions are being set negatively or they are being set positively, and that common viewpoint which says "I'll just wait until Johnny can decide for himself" is a pernicious thing, for Johnny is constantly deciding and Johnny is constantly getting his scheme of values from dad and mother. If within the "Family Portrait" there is a pattern of regularity of attendance upon public worship, he may fit it definitely within his own scheme of values. So, too, with personal devotions and the other techniques for enlarging the life of the spirit.

Paul has a haunting phrase in his letter to some

of his friends at Colossae; for he speaks of the "church in thy house," and that phrase came out of a setting in which there were no separate buildings for the propagation of the Christian religion. Then as now, every home was teaching religion of some sort, and there was no neutrality!

It must be noted that this whole matter of character formulated within the "Family Portrait" has implications for the survival of our culture. Free democratic personalities do not come out of a home dominated by a dictator whose authority rests on the rights of parenthood alone. Parenthetically we could point out that the democratic pattern of government or culture is almost impossible in that type of family pattern previously described as patriarchal. It is not striking a prophetic note to say that children from any but the democratic type of home will have difficulty in living in tomorrow's world.

UNWORTHY PARENTHOOD

Look at another implication of this matter. We speak of the Fatherhood of God, and are under the constant necessity of clarifying our concepts. Some years ago, I was talking to a sixteen-year-old youngster in one of the Denver schools. We were discussing the beliefs of the church. I made the statement that God is like a father and I shall never forget the flash in her eyes as she lashed back at me: "If God is like my dad, I will have nothing to do with him." One need not draw the moral.

Or we talk of the "beloved community" in terms of family relationships, and immediately we erect a barrier. Think for a moment of those emotionally immature parents you know who keep their children dependent upon them for the sake of parental gratification or of those selfish parents who dominate their children for the sake of parental comfort. Every minister knows only too well the tragic family patterns perpetrated by parents whom the world sometimes labels as good.

It is not too much to say that this informal character and religious education of the child begins and ends within the framework of the "Family Portrait." An additional clarification of this idea might be found in the simple matter of mechanical acquisition of languages. The words we use never quite lose the distinct character put on them in the family circle. Let this acquisition of language stand as a symbol. Some folks never quite catch the deeper meanings of spiritual living because those deeper meanings were not resident within the "Family Portrait." The child that cannot find God within the communications of family life will not have an easy time finding him anywhere.

This day reminds us of the faith we learned about within the family framework and the happy personal relationships we remember, for these disclosed much of the deeper meaning of God.

In "The Road Mender," Michael Fairless tells us of an organ grinder by the name of Godine. His experiences were many and varied and most of them

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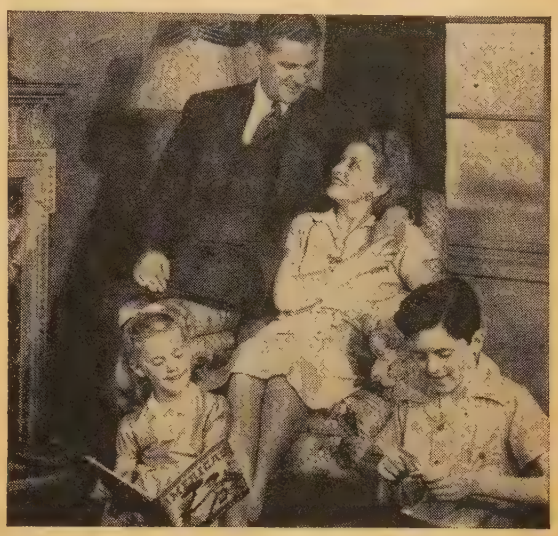

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were ugly and devoid of spiritual values, but one day "he saw the face of a little child and looked on God," and from that hour forward Godine was a changed personality.

Thus do many of us become sure of the Fatherhood of God, for within the "Family Portrait" of which we were a part there was a father or a mother or someone else who was Christlike.

THE FAMILY BECOMES THE FAMILY OF GOD

From the richly endowed experiences and associations within the "Family Portrait" to the wider relationships within the family of God throughout the earth, is an easy step. Regina Nelson Wieman, in her book *The Modern Family and the Church,* has pointed out that "except as men devote themselves to the highest reality they can conceive and then express this devotion in terms of effective loyalty to the most significant realities of their diverse everyday experiences and associations, they suffer chaotic depressions, devitalizing wars, and contagious evils of all sorts."

The church has always fostered a certain way of living that is rooted in love. Jesus set first—the love of God as the supremely worthful object of all human devotion and the love of one's neighbor as one's self. This principle of living, fundamental to the highest human and cultural fulfillment, must be caught and taught within the "Family Portrait" if that ever-growing unity among men which is also known as the Kingdom of God is to be a reality in the world.

THE American people must never be permitted to forget that they are a nation of immigrants and the children of immigrants.

AVERELL W. HARRIMAN.

Think Magnificently of God

By E. CROSSLEY HUNTER

"Thou thoughtest that I was altogether such an one as thyself." Psalm 50:21.

WILLIAM LAW was one of the great mystics of the Christian church. He lived two hundred years ago, but his books on *Christian Perfection, The Serious Call* and *The Spirit of Love* are classics in religious literature. In one of his devotional books he uses this phrase, "Think magnificently of God." It is a noble and necessary appeal, for man is always in danger of making God in his own image and thinking unworthily of the Eternal.

Our text is a protest on the part of God. He resents man's reading his human limitations and weaknesses into his thought of the Eternal. "Thou thoughtest," said God to man, "that I was altogether such an one as thyself." Now nothing could be more important than that we should have right views of God, for nations and individuals live ultimately on their vision of God. Our theology determines our conduct. There is a very superficial attitude today which claims that it matters little what we believe so long as we do what is right. Such talk is nonsense, for our conception of right depends on what we believe. Which is to say that our creed is the most determining thing in life. Many of the basic values and principles upon which our civilization has been built—respect for the plighted word; the worth of human

A Pastoral Prayer

By ROY C. HELFENSTEIN

THOU GOD of infinite love and of complete understanding, with reverence and faith we turn our thoughts to Thee in prayer. Forgive us of our sins; have patience with our doubts; look mercifully upon our coldness of heart. Quicken Thou our understanding, make strong our love, renew a right spirit within us.

Our perplexities are so many, our triumphs are so few, our sorrows are so baffling; but in Thee do we find strength to sustain in every hour of need. Fulfill in us Thy purpose for our lives; create in us a clean heart, strengthen our faith, and inspire us in all things to do Thy holy will. What we ask for ourselves, we ask also for all those we love, wherever they may be. Turn Thou their thoughts to Thee, and may Thy divine grace abide and abound in their lives.

We pray for our church and for the Church Universal, that its light of faith may be held high before the world in this time of confusion and darkness. May the power of Christ make strong the church which bears his name and claims his spirit.

We pray for our nation, for those who guide its destiny and for all its people, that the doing of Thy will may be paramount in their thoughts and purposes.

We pray for all men everywhere—for all the nations and their leaders—that Thy Holy Spirit of love and good will may rule in their hearts and minds in the building of brotherhood and peace throughout the world. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

personality; the sense of man's equality in the sight of God; the rights of the weak; justice to minority groups; and kindness and mercy—had their roots in our Christian faith, and if they are being repudiated today it is because of man's lack of that faith.

LIKE NATION, LIKE GOD

The character of a nation is determined by the kind of god it worships. The gods of Greece were ideals of beauty—physical beauty—but not moral perfection. Therefore the Greeks were known for their aesthetic tastes rather than righteous living. The gods of Rome were supermen—Jove with his thunderbolt, Mars with his sword. It was inevitable that worshiping such gods Rome should seek to rule the world.

There was a close relation between the fanatic patriotism of the Japanese and their worship of the emperor, while Hitler knew he had to rid Germany of the Jewish and Christian doctrine if he were to make Germany believe she was destined to be the master race, with the purest blood of all the world. Hitler needed a new and devilish creed for his infamous purposes.

"Think mangificently of God." Perhaps our commonest blunder is that too often we have thought of God as a glorified earthly king. In earlier days the king was aloof from his people, and to approach an earthly monarch required careful preparation. One had to be dressed correctly, bow properly, and be introduced by an intermediary. Much of the ritual and ceremony in religion is thus accounted for. Indeed a great historian said that when we have studied the sacrificial rites and ceremonies used in religion we have a complete picture of the relation between our ancestors and their chiefs or kings. We have thought of God as an earthly king and therefore it was necessary to approach him through priest and ceremony. While of course there should always be decorum and reverence in every act of our worship we must never forget the words of Jesus: "When thou prayest, enter into thy closet, and when thou hast shut thy door, pray to thy Father which is in secret; and thy Father which seeth in secret shall reward thee openly."

EARLY DOCTRINES OF HELL

All too often man has read his cruelties into his thought of God. There was a day when men found it easy to be cruel toward their fellow men, a day when a hundred crimes—some of them we would call trivial—were punishable by death, a day when men were imprisoned for long terms under conditions of unbelievable cruelty, and when children were put in jail and fed on bread and water; then it was that men read their harshness into their thinking about God. What terrible doctrines of hell the church believed and taught in those cruel days! Here is a quotation from a sermon preached eighty years ago: "Hell is a dark and frightful sphere, cursed of God, with infernal vapors, oceans of liquid fire and continents of burning rock. No one has a friend and all are herded with the foulest demons and every stinking cave is in-

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habited with fiends, while God plies his burning whip over the ceaseless groans of the lost." Jonathan Edwards, famous divine, said: "I doubt not that the floor of hell is covered with squirming infants who have never been baptized." Surely, when man thought so cruelly of God, God must have been saying with sorrow: "Thou thoughtest that I was altogether such an one as thyself."

Again we have been guilty of reading our national prides and prejudices into our conception of God. Each nation in turn has thought of itself as God's favorite, and therefore superior over others. In one of his books, Stanley Jones lists these proud national claims: "The pious Jew thanks God every day that he was not born a Gentile. The Greeks coined the word 'barbarian' as a term of contempt for all who were non-Greeks. The Romans despised every nation over which they ruled, while the shah of Persia still retains in his title the phrase, 'The Center of the Universe.' The Chinese call their country 'The Middle Kingdom' because they believe it is the center of the world, while the Japanese believe they have descended from heaven, and are a heavenly race. The Japanese emperor calls himself 'Manifest Deity.' The United States is called 'God's Own Country.' The Irish say, 'Sinn Fein,' which means 'Ourselves Alone.' The Germans have called their land 'The Fatherland Over All.'" Here in Canada a popular religious movement claims that England is the true Israel, the chosen of God, and all the promises made to Abraham and Israel are for her.

May God forgive us for reading our national pride and racial prejudices into our conception of him! Surely he must say again and again with breaking heart, "Thou thoughtest that I was altogether such an one as thyself."

THE GREAT REVEALER

There was One who came to make God fully known, even the Son who knew the Father as none other ever knew him. John has a lovely verse in the first chapter of his Gospel: "No man hath seen God at any time. The only begotten Son, he hath declared him." The revised version changes that word "declared" to "unveiled." It is a beautiful translation: "The only begotten Son hath unveiled him." Before Jesus came, God was only partially known. His presence was dimly felt in the pillar of fire and in the destroying angel. Moses learned something of him at the burning bush, Joseph in his dreams, Isaiah in his

'Short Cuts'

A Sermon for Children by Ralph C. Lankler

EVERY SPRING we have trouble with the boys and girls who run across the lawn of the church. We put up chains, but they jump over them. We erect signs saying "Keep Off the Grass," but they don't read them. Now, why do they walk on the grass? Do they want to destroy the lawn? No, when you talk to them about it, they will tell you that they were in a hurry and just didn't think.

Well, people who are in a hurry and take short cuts are either lazy or poor planners. If they go through life cutting corners, they will never do good work nor will they find happiness. Those who try to do their lessons in school the quickest and easiest way may find that their work is not acceptable. There are many men and women who take short cuts trying to make money by gambling, instead of working—a short cut which often leads to jail.

NO SHORT CUTS TO GOOD LIVES

We are happy to know that there are no short cuts to a strong body, a bright mind or a good character. If we want strong, healthy bodies, we must exercise; if we want bright minds, we must go to school and study; if we want good characters, we must go to church and practice our religion. There are no short cuts to the good life or to heaven. Most short cuts lead in the opposite direction.

As we watch God working through nature, we see that he grows things very slowly. Think of how long it takes to grow a flower; first the seed, then the blade, then the stalk, then the blossom, then the flower. Blades of grass are like little flowers and they grow very slowly. We can tramp them down and destroy them quickly, but we cannot restore them with the same speed.

TAKE TIME—AND DO YOUR BEST

It takes a long time to grow a beautiful flower and it takes a long time to grow a good man or woman. You see, that is what we try to do in Sunday school—grow Christian men and women. Little by little, day by day, year by year, we help boys and girls to grow into the likeness of our Lord Jesus Christ. They graduate from the Cradle Roll to the Beginners Department, to the Primary, to the Junior Department, and so on until they graduate into church membership.

You cannot suddenly become a man or woman overnight, and you cannot suddenly become a Christian. There are no short cuts there. It is a lifelong experience.

Don't try to take short cuts in your work, in your studies, in your life. Take time—and always do your very best.

vision; but these partial revelations left the hearts of men still wondering and hungry for a larger knowledge.

Then Jesus came; the Word became flesh and the Divine incarnate. Man saw what God was like. If, as Jesus said, "This is life eternal that they might know thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent," then surely the greatest word Christ ever spoke was this: He that hath seen me hath seen the Father."

Tell it to the sorrowful—that Jesus, who felt the sorrows of mankind and wept at the grave of the lonely, was revealing God. Tell it to the suffering—that Jesus, who healed the sick and pitied the afflicted, was revealing the compassion of the Father. Tell it to the children—that Jesus, who called the litle ones and said, "Of such is the kingdom of heaven," was revealing the tenderness of God toward every child.

Tell it to the sinful—that Jesus, who was not ashamed to be called the friend of publicans and sinners, and who forgave them who crucified him, was revealing the love in the heart of the Eternal.

We will never hear any truth on earth or in heaven more wonderful or more welcome than this—that God, our Creator and Savior and Judge, is like Jesus Christ.

> Yes, I may love thee too, O Lord,
> Almighty as thou art,
> For thou hast stooped to ask of me
> The love of my poor heart.

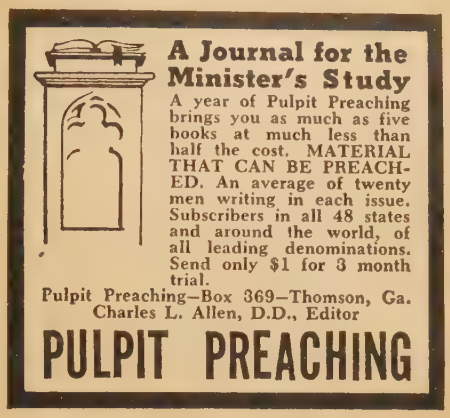
And when we think of that love perfectly revealed in Jesus Christ, then do we "think magnificently of God."

We yield undying allegiance to Christ, and to none other, because of what his reign over us makes possible. He admits us into the secret of his mind. The organ of spiritual knowledge is an obedient spirit. On his own authority—and all authentic experience validates his claim—he that willeth to do his will shall know of his teaching whether it be of God. . . . Jesus Christ, and Jesus Christ only, has the sure word and way for meeting all the ills of this world and of this time. He only knows and can diagnose the disease and afford the cure. His example, his unerring principles, his wondrous gospel and his program point the way, and he himself is the efficient source of the superhuman power needed to enable us to travel his way. He is great enough to meet the present overwhelming world situation, or he is not great enough to satisfy the needs and longings of our own hearts.

John R. Mott.

Beware of what you think—you will come to look like it. Beware of what you say—you will come to believe it. Beware of what you wish—if you stick around long enough, you will get it. . . . If war comes, it will not be because it was inevitable, but because too many believed it to be inevitable.

Cord Meyer, Jr.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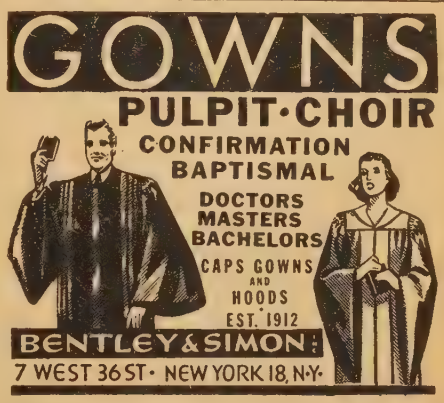

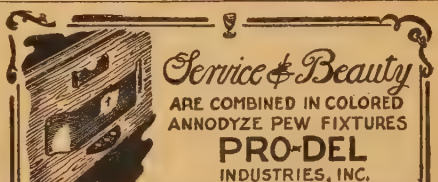

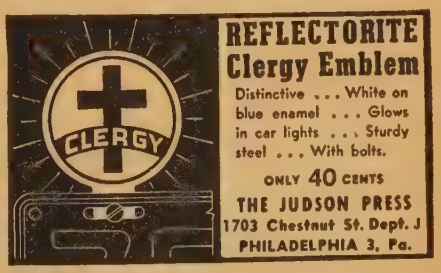
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A Layman Speaks to Young Preachers

By JOSEPHUS DANIELS*

IN A life spared beyond the scriptural threescore and ten I have been privileged at Monticello to read the Declaration of Independence from the porch of the shrine of my political mentor; to stand in City Roads Chapel in London in the pulpit of my religious patron saint; to serve as delegate to the General Conferences of our church and have part in the election of great souls to the office of bishop; to sit in council with America's chief official apostles of peace in two wars. All these honors were beyond my deserving. But I speak sincerely when I say to you that no honor has come to me, unworthy as I am, that so humbles me as to be asked to give counsel to the young ministers called of God to minister at holy altars. Two things compelled acceptance of the appointment.

1. One was that if my sainted Methodist mother were alive she would say to me, as I have heard her say to not a few young preachers: "God guides the bishop in sending men where he needs them and where he will crown their work with his favor."

2. My mother's chief disappointment in life was that her one unanswered prayer was that one of her sons was not called of God to preach the gospel. She would have felt more highly honored by such service than if either had inspired listening senates or been elevated to the chief magistracy of the republic. And I shared and share the belief that you young Wesleyans are coming into the most exalted station among men at a time that will challenge all that is best within you. I can truly say that if the voice of God had called me to the ministry in my young manhood, as my mother hoped, I would then have gladly said: "Here am I. Send me." . . .

● *In the Footsteps of Asbury*

It may be more than a coincidence that today you take the vows in a section early blessed by the ministry of Asbury. That Prophet of the Long Road preached in Elizabeth City in 1804 and spread the gospel in North Carolina as an itinerant to listening pioneers along the Pasquotank river; in the State Capitol building at Raleigh; presided over the first Methodist Conference in this state on April 20, 1785, at the home of Green Hill in Franklin county, and left his footprints on the shores of Lake Junaluska, the seat of the Methodist Summer Assembly. May I not challenge you to follow in the footsteps of Asbury, the first bishop of Methodism in the New World? He traveled 270,000 miles on horseback and preached 16,275 sermons and left an impress upon our church and commonwealth that has been the human rock upon which Methodism has builded a great evangelistic church. And in this city, where people heard him gladly and where the seed he planted is still bearing fruit after its kind, your church today will give you its imprimatur and your brethren will pray that a double portion of the spirit of the Christ and of the founders of our church may fall upon you in the hour of your consecration.

If I am in the least worthy to counsel with you in this your day of high adventure, I would express the earnest hope that you will be saved from clerical professionalism, which tends to dependence on ritualism, forms of worship and dress, and the belief that the gospel is to be proclaimed only in consecrated sanctuaries.

JOSEPHUS DANIELS

● *'The World Is My Parish'*

The early Methodists had a choice to make when the Wesley direction "The world is my parish," became their marching orders and brought them early to the New World. That choice was whether to blaze new trails in a New World or to hold fast to the patterns and rituals of the English established church in which Wesley was reared, but which disowned him when he felt the compulsion to carry the gospel to forgotten peoples toiling in the fields or mining coal in the bowels of the earth at Newcastle, and to dwellers in the slums of cities where the voice of the preacher was seldom heard and social welfare had not come to mitigate human miseries.

I beg of you to follow the long road blazed by the early Methodists of America — Asbury, Strawbridge and like men — who gathered at the celebrated Christmas Conference in Baltimore to make the Methodist Episcopal Church the first independent national ecclesiastical organization in America. Wesley's political pamphlets upholding George III's policy toward the colonists put Methodists in America under suspicion as Tories, and but for the downright patriotism of Rev. Robert Strawbridge—"eloquent, fiery and fluent preacher"—and other like native young American preachers, that one error of Wesley might have militated against the acceptance of Methodism when the colonies became a free republic. The native American preachers declared that American Methodists had no traditional attachment to the Anglican church, and did not hold to deferential sympathy or accept the doctrine of apostolic succession as held by the English church. Convinced that they knew the only American way better than anyone outside the new republic, Wesley later followed their lead, and the ties that had bound them to the established church were cut; and, free and independent, the Methodist church grew to lead all creeds in membership in the New World. . . .

● *The Genius of Methodism*

All Methodists should bear in mind and make it their goal today to measure up, at least in spirit, to what Green in his *History of the English People* said of Methodists:

"The great body which he [Wesley] thus founded numbered a hundred thousand members at his death and now counts its members in England and America by millions. But the Methodists themselves were the least result of the Methodist revival. Its action upon the church broke the lethargy of the clergy; and the 'Evangelical' movement, which found representatives like Newton and Cecil within the pale of the Establishment, made the fox-hunting parson and the absentee rector at last impossible."

Methodism in the New World went with the pioneers as they felled the trees to make dwelling places in the wilderness. The circuit riders did not wait for the erection of church buildings, but preached to the people in the open or in their temporary homes as they trekked from the seaboard on they way to building a democratic

* This address was delivered by Mr. Daniels a few months before his death to the young ministers of the North Carolina Methodist Conference.

republic on Christian principles in the South and West.

Is there not here a lesson to the preachers of our day when many people who most need the healing of the gospel do not enter the doors of the church? If the people do not go to church, the call is for the preacher to carry the message wherever they stand in need of its saving grace in the crowded streets and in the byways. That was the call your predecessors in the gospel heard and answered. Perhaps the greatest blunder of Methodism in England, after rejecting Wesleyan evangelism, was that it failed to see the fields white unto the harvest that beckoned a dynamic Methodist, General William Booth, to service among the down and out. That failure made the Salvation Army the great independent agency which challenges the church today to a like carrying of the gospel to the unchurched.

Perhaps, instead of affirmative counsel, a layman should suggest from the pew a few *Don'ts* as you enter upon your ministry:

● *A Call to Courage*

1. Don't be afraid. In spite of the physical prosperity of today the world is in the throes of fear. This is not only true of the frustration about world conditions; the church has caught the contagion. I bid you cast out all fears as you go forth as pastors of people needing a courage that will inspire faith in today and all the tomorrows. Have faith in the future, in yourselves, in your fellow men, and believe that as long as God reigns in his heaven all may be made well with the world tomorrow, no matter how dark the clouds today.

The truest courage displayed and the highest wisdom by any civic leader of our generation was by the late President Roosevelt in his first inaugural address. He was speaking to a generation in the grip of the worst depression in their history. They had seen their possessions shrink or be swept away—many had been evicted from their homes—and millions of willing workers were walking the streets vainly seeking jobs. Dread of the tomorrow sat on every heart. The people were almost hopeless and many were hungry. They saw no rainbow piercing the clouds. The road ahead seemed blocked. Could there be balm in Gilead? Out of the hopelessness of that never forgettable period came the clear, calm voice of confidence that dissipated the gloom, which was so thick you could cut it with a knife. That sentence was: "The only thing we have to fear is fear itself." That is our challenge in this day of drifting.

2. Don't be afraid to ring out clear and true for unpopular causes even if it cuts across the views or interests of some members of your church. Asked the road to political success by an ambitious young man, a wise statesman said: "Attach yourself to a righteous unpopular cause." The great preachers who have lived have never asked: "Is it popular?"—but, "Is it right?"

● *Chief Tasks of the Ministry*

3. Don't be afraid to tell your board of stewards and your congregation that you have come to call sinners to repentance, to comfort the bereaved, to give cheer to the poor, to minister to the sick, to touch the lives of those needing the help of the gospel and not to "serve tables." Suggest the reintroduction of the biblical division of duty in the church. Read to the congregation Acts 6:1-6 where the disciples declared: "It is not reason that we should leave the word of God and serve tables," so we "will give ourselves continually to prayer and to the ministry of the Word."

The institution of laymen to carry on all the work other than set forth in that scripture should be reinstated in all churches. Is it not true today that many of the laity have become AWOL in the call to full service, and sometimes preachers have assumed powers and duties that should devolve upon the pew? Not a few laymen—I among the rest—have thought of the church as a carryall with the preacher harnessed between the shafts, the good women pushing and shoving and the laymen lying inside on soft cushions, being transported to Zion with no effort on their part. As long as the preachers permit themselves to be so harnessed they need not complain of the load. They should, with all sweetness and light, call the laymen to relieve them of "serving tables." By so doing the preacher will be doing a needed act. He will be keeping the laymen too busy serving the needs of the modern church in its multiplied activities to fall from grace. He will, also, increase democratization and lay responsibility in every congregation.

● *How Preach an Effective Gospel?*

4. Don't be afraid of innovations or the use of modern agencies. The radio and the talking pictures are a part of life. They have come to stay. Do not condemn them. Convert them. Put them to spreading the gospel. Moving pictures depicting Bible scenes and missionary enterprises and Christian progress should be utilized in the churches and Sunday schools.

5. Don't preach to empty pews. If the people do not come to the church, the church must go to the people. It must mix with men who sweat and hope and suffer, wherever they can be found. The command of the Master was not, "Minister in a consecrated church." It was, "Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature"—this means to go to those who live on the other side of the tracks and carry the cheer of the gospel.

6. Don't fail to bring in your sermon a message that will compel the attention of your congregation. Dullness is the only unforgivable sin in the pulpit. I sometimes think that the lay official was right who, when asked what should be done if the congregation was indifferent, listless and sleepy during the sermon, said: "Go into the pulpit and wake up the preacher." Unless the preacher can hold the attention of his hearers he needs to be aroused himself.

● *Evangelism to Be Stressed*

7. Don't be afraid of being called a sensationalist, a revivalist or evangelist. The most sensational utterance of all history was, "Ye must be born again." It was beyond the understanding of the Sanhedrin and of the lawyer who sought an interpretation from Jesus. There is danger that some preachers will be so afraid of being called exhorters or revivalists that they fail to arouse the interest or hold the attention of their congregation by declaring and stressing the plan of salvation laid down in the Bible.

At the General Conference in Dallas a fellow delegate asked me for whom I planned to vote for the bishopric. I gave the name of a prominent evangelistic preacher. The delegate who had questioned me gave this advice: "Don't vote for him. He has no qualifications as an administrator—he is only an evangelist." I replied: "Thank God for his evangelism. The church needs preachers who will call sinners to repentance more than it does administrators." The evangelist was elected and has proved he possesses all the qualities needed in administration—gifts inferior to those required in a winner of souls. That bishop has not forgotten that God expects to save the world by evangelical preaching that stirs the hearts of men and women.

● *Preaching to the Heart*

8. Don't be afraid of appealing to the emotions. I have never known a man to be converted unless his heart was touched. If there is one pitfall today for young preachers more dangerous than any other, it is to believe that the only way to reach the people is through logic and reason. No preacher can safely neglect appealing to the intellect. But we are told in the Scripture, "Out of the heart come the issues of life." If you can use only one barrel of

(Continued on Page 118)

☆ Who's Who In This Issue ☆

Rev. Ivan H. Hagedorn *has for the past* thirteen years ministered at Bethel Evangelical Lutheran Church in Philadelphia. His first pastorate was at Collingswood, N. J. His later education was received at Gettysburg College, Gettysburg Lutheran Seminary and Temple University.

Graduating from Union Seminary in 1941, *Rev.* Ira W. Langston was called to the ministry of the Park Avenue Christian Church, New York. He is an alternate member of the American Committee for the World Council of Churches and a member of the Committee on Education and Promotion for the American committee of the council.

Following his graduation at the Iliff School of Theology, Rev. H. Gordon Birky served in a rural parish in western Nebraska for three years, then in 1941 was called as minister of youth at College Hill Methodist Church, Wichita, Kan. In 1944 he entered the chaplaincy of the U. S. Naval Reserve. In 1946 he was appointed minister of education in First Methodist Church, Huntington Park, Calif.

Rev. Marvin B. Kober *has been pastor of St.* Paul's Methodist Church (3,300 members), Cedar Rapids, Iowa, for the past three years. Prior to that he ministered at First Methodist Church, Mason City, Iowa, and was Wesley Foundation director at Greeley, Colo. He was one of twelve American Methodist churchmen selected by the Board of Missions to go to China in 1947 to help the Chinese Methodist Church celebrate its centennial. He flew 24,000 miles in seven weeks' visitation in China, Japan and the Philippines. He received his theological education at the Iliff School of Theology.

Since the organization of the United Church of Canada, Rev. E. Crossley Hunter has ministered at Knox Church in Winnipeg. In earlier years he was a minister of the Methodist Church, with pastorates in Toronto and Hamilton, Ont. He graduated in arts from Toronto University and in theology from Emmanuel College, Toronto.

The late Josephus Daniels *was, up to the time* of his death last January, editor and publisher of the *News and Observer* of Raleigh, N. C. He achieved national fame as Secretary of the Navy under President Wilson and as Ambassador to Mexico under President Franklin D. Roosevelt. His services to his church were no less distinguished. His address is given to *Pulpit* readers through the courtesy of his son, Jonathan Daniels, and by permission of the editor of *Christian Frontiers,* in which magazine it was originally published.

Rev. Roy C. Helfenstein *is minister of the* First Congregational Church, Mason City, Iowa

Rev. Ralph C. Lankler *is minister of the First* Presbyterian Church, Cortland, N. Y.

Titles and Texts ☆ WHAT PULPIT READERS ARE PREACHING ABOUT

Wayne M. Miller, Presbyterian, La Porte, Colo. "The Divine Imperative." Matt. 4:18-20—"He saw two brothers . . . casting a net in the sea . . . so he said to them, 'Come, follow me, and I will make you fish for men.' And they dropped their nets at once and followed him." (Moffatt)

Kroum S. Jordan, First Church in Weymouth (Mass.) "Should Man Submit to His Fate?" Rom. 12:2—"Be not conformed to this world, but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God."

Alfred S. Wakefield, First Methodist, Chatsworth, Ill. "Who Are You?" John 1:22—"Who are you? Let us have an answer for those who sent us. What do you say for yourself?"

FOR YOUR SERMON AND TEXT

..... *Title of sermon*

..... *Text used (write out the text)*

..... *Name of minister*

..... *Name of church*

..... *Address*

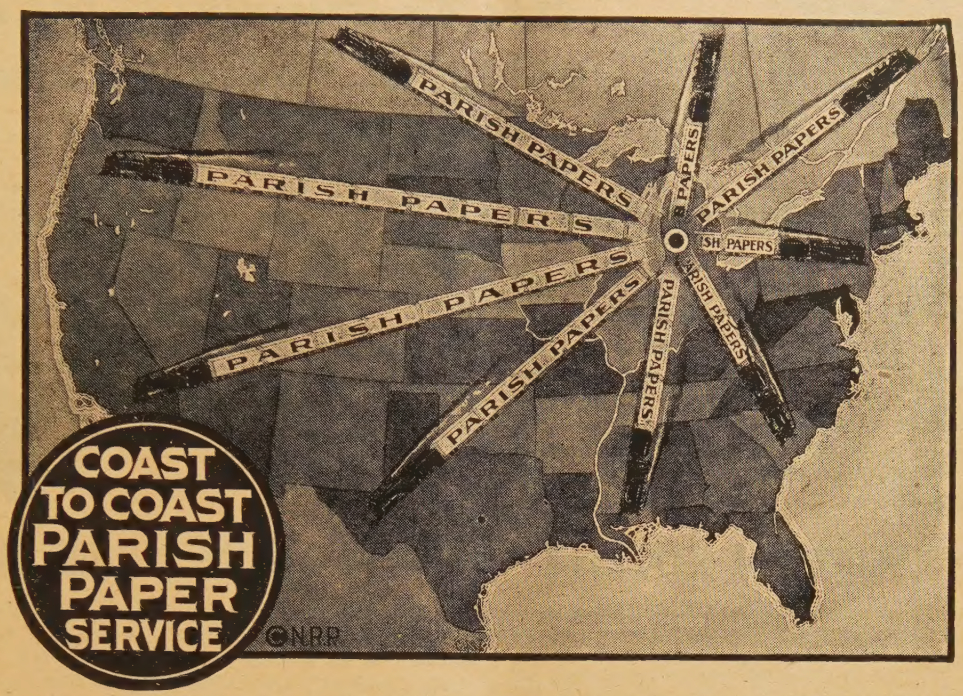
A LAYMAN SPEAKS

(Continued from Page 117)

the two-barreled gospel gun—logic and emotion—I beseech you as a minister of the gospel first to seek entrance into the hearts of the people. Men cannot be saved by logic though it should be employed to strengthen the impulses of the heart.

The early Methodist preachers were not afraid of awakening the deepest wellsprings of human beings. The Scripture says: "With the heart man believeth unto righteousness." If I could give only one admonition to the young preacher, it would be: Seek entrance into the affection of men and women and children and do not be afraid of calling the emotions into play. My good wife once said: "I do not wish to hear a man preach who does not make me wish to cry, at least cry a little." She knew that emotion is the mainspring that touches the whole being and leads seasoned reason into saving faith.

As for these *don'ts* from the pew by one who ventures to give counsel without feeling a sense of worthiness, I pray you will give them only the consideration they deserve. . . . With a sense of responsibility I have spoken out of my heart what I trust has at least the merit of long consideration. It is given with sincerity and devotion to our church and with the sincere prayer that you may be guided and strengthened not by the word of man but by the spirit of the head of the church who has called you to minister at its altars.



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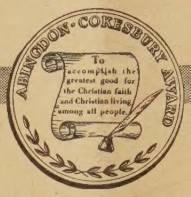
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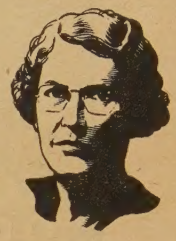

The RELIGION of MATURITY

This solid, competent book concerns itself with the question, *"What is 'true religion'?"* The author finds his answer in the mind of Jesus: what He took from his spiritual heritage; what He discarded; what He himself contributed and its meaning for our times—*the religion of maturity.* The subject matter is divided into five logical sections:

I. THE PROPHETIC WORD: *The Revelation of the Word; "Thus Saith the Lord"; Jesus and the Prophets.* A study of the prophets of Israel—their material; their psychological conditioning; the relevance of their message; their revelation of the Word of God; and how Jesus built upon their teachings.

II. JESUS AND THE RELIGION OF THE ALTAR: *The Religion of the Altar; "A sacrifice acceptable and pleasing to God"; Jesus and the Priests.* The religion of the priestly movement—in sharp and incisive contrast with the prophetic Word of revelation—and its method, ritual; and its goal, salvation in ceremonial observance and practice. The Last Supper, an acted parable of Jesus' prophetic offering of Himself for the sins of the World.

III. JESUS AND THE RELIGION OF THE BOOK: *The Religion of the Book; "The Scribes . . . sit in Moses' seat"; Jesus and the Scribes.* The religion of the scribes and Pharisees—their authority, tradition; their method, casuistry; the social expression of their religion, the Synagogue; and their chief weaknesses—the substitution of laws for law, legalism for righteousness, the sovereignty of the Book for the sovereignty of God. How Jesus used the law freshly and provocatively for the enthronement of God in the heart and life of man.

IV. JESUS AND THE RELIGION OF THE THRONE: *The Religion of the Throne; "Understanding in all visions"; Jesus and the Apocalyptists.* The prophet sees God's throne as established on earth, in the midst of history here and now, however dismal the prospect; the apocalyptist sees it only as a vision in heaven and without meaning, except by way of hopeless judgment for the present. Jesus' vision, experiences and stories, the fellowship founded by those who believed in Him and in His gospel.

V. THE RELIGION OF MATURITY: *The Old Wine; The New Wine of the Gospel; The New Wineskins.* The three religions of Altar, Book, and Throne—so grown up about the prophetic Word as to sap away its life into unproductive channels—seen by Jesus to be so morally inadequate to the needs of men that He prophesied their disuse. How the New Testament *Religion of Maturity,* the new wine of the Gospel, continues the stream of Old Testament revelation and is the Divine Act to complete the Divine Word—"I have come not to abolish but to fulfill"—and Jesus is its authority. The New Wineskins are the members of the Christian community (the Church) who live in close fellowship with Jesus as He desired and desires; new people in God, exemplifying both Gospel principles of individual freedom and communal fellowship, a Church—laity and clergy—wholly true to her Lord in the Christian way.

$3

PRAYER and the COMMON LIFE

Miss Harkness writes with the conviction that "of all the things the world now desperately needs, none is more needed than an upsurge of vital, God-centered, intelligently grounded prayer." *Prayer and the Common Life* is written for both private reading and group or class study and discussion. It bears the marks of a highly skilled mind, but is unencumbered by the specialized vocabulary which would make it forbidding to the layman. The manuscript is conveniently arranged in thirteen chapters, under three main divisions:

I. THE FOUNDATIONS OF PRAYER: *Prayer and Christian Belief; Prayer as Adoration and Thanksgiving; Prayer as Confession and Petition; Prayer as Intercession and Commitment; Prayer as Assurance and Ascription to Christ.* Here prayer is related to the basic Christian beliefs about God, man, and the world. The elements of prayer—adoration, thanksgiving, confession, petition, intercession, commitment, assurance, and ascription to Christ—are analyzed. Many important questions are answered, and vital suggestions given.

II. METHODS OF PRAYER: *Hindrances to Prayer; Ways of Praying; Private Devotions; Congregational Worship.* A study of hindrances to prayer which are other than problems of belief; the ways of praying—problems of method, times, and places, and prayer "without ceasing"; the period of private devotions, including devotional aids, posture and diction, what to do about distractions and wandering thoughts, and the test of achievement; the general principles and distinctive elements of congregational worship and worship by radio.

III. THE FRUITS OF PRAYER: *Prayer and Peace of Mind; Fear, Loneliness, and Grief; Sin and Guilt; Prayer and the Peace of the World.* Here the common disturbers of personal peace—frustration, fear, loneliness, grief and guilt—are stimulatingly dealt with; and the concluding chapter suggests the ways in which prayer can contribute to peace.

In terms of spiritual fruitfulness and enduring influence, Miss Harkness has produced a work of prime importance. It is high in intellectual content and popular at the same time. It discusses questions which are common to the lives of all people everywhere, regardless of opportunity or lack of it. As readers of the manuscript put it, "It will be a godsend to thousands, the best book on the subject since Buttrick's *Prayer . . .*" and "It does not repeat Dr. Buttrick's book at all. It covers territory all its own, in its own effective way."

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